



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
ALASKA OPERATIONS OFFICE
Room 537, Federal Building
222 W. 7th Avenue, #19
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7588

July 28, 2011

President Luki Akelkok Sr.
Ekwok Village Council
P O Box 35
Ekwok, Alaska 99580

RE: Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment Traditional Knowledge Effort

Dear President Akelkok:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is planning to solicit Traditional Knowledge (TK) to assist with preparing the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment.

EPA is conducting a scientific analysis of the Bristol Bay watershed to better understand how future large-scale development may affect water quality and the salmon fishery. The information gathered will help guide future actions to protect the waters and promote sustainable development.

EPA's efforts will focus on two areas -- the Nushagak and Kvichak watersheds. To view the outline for EPA's watershed assessment and other recent news, please check out the EPA website at www.epa.gov/region10/bristolbay.

EPA has contracted with Alan Boraas, Professor of Anthropology, and Catherine Knott, Adjunct Professor of Anthropology, from the Kenai Peninsula College to conduct this TK effort. There is enough funding for them to visit about six communities in the Bristol Bay region to do this work. EPA is focusing this TK effort in the Nushagak and Kvichak watersheds and would like to conduct public meetings in the following communities: Ekwok, Koliganek, Iliamna, Newhalen, Nondalton, and Igiugig, however EPA needs to hear from the tribal governments of these villages that they want to participate in this effort.

If your community believes that it should be included in this effort, please submit a written request to Tami Fordham, Alaska Resource Extraction Tribal Policy Advisor, no later than August 8th, 2011. EPA is requesting that the tribal governments provide a written statement of support for their community to participate in this project and also a designated tribal representative to work with Dr. Boraas to identify Elders and Culture Bearers that he should work with in the community. EPA will consider each request, and include additional communities in the TK process as time and resources permit.

Although it is not feasible to collect TK feedback from all Bristol Bay communities through public meetings, communities may also opt to send Dr. Boraas written TK information relevant

to EPA's Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment. A draft list of suggested questions is enclosed for your consideration. We would appreciate any written information by August 31, 2011. Please work directly with Dr. Boraas to submit any written TK information.

Dr. Boraas has included an introductory letter, methodology for the study, the draft questions, and the consent form. If you have any comments on the questions or any of the materials included please submit those in writing, directly to Dr. Boraas, no later than August 8th, 2011.

The scheduling of the community visits will occur in August. EPA understands that this is a busy time for subsistence but we are hoping that there will be a window of opportunity that will work for the community to participate in this effort. The TK report will be included in the draft Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment which is scheduled to be compiled and ready for public review in the Spring of 2012. EPA is working with a team of scientists to draft the assessment and we hope that you will participate in the TK effort so that it can be incorporated into the assessment.

Thank you for your continued interest and participation in the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment. Please contact me at (907)271-1217 or parkin.richard@epa.gov, if you have any questions or concerns regarding this letter. You may also contact Tami Fordham, EPA's Alaska Resource Extraction Tribal Policy Advisor, at (907)271-1484 or fordham.tami@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard B. Parkin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being more prominent than the last name "Parkin".

Richard B. Parkin
Acting Alaska Operations Office Director

Enclosures

CC: Tribal Environmental Coordinators (via email)